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# Christmas and Beyond

University of Dayton

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# NEWS



SELECT LANGUAGE



*Monday October 26, 2015*

## Christmas and Beyond

The University of Dayton will celebrate “Christmas and Beyond” with its annual exhibit of Nativities from around the world and the installation of a new model train display built to tell the story of Jesus’ young life.

“At the Manger: Christmas and Beyond” runs from Saturday, Nov. 28, to Sunday, Jan. 24, inside Roesch Library. It is free and open to the public. A grand opening celebration from 1 to 5 p.m. Nov. 28 will

feature children's activities, light refreshment, entertainment by the Dayton Celebration Chorus and a college football viewing area.

"We want to make sure people understand that when we talk about the Nativity, it's not only a representation of the Holy Family surrounded by shepherds, kings and oxen. We want to put the Nativity as we traditionally know it into a broader context — historically speaking, but also from the point of view of meaning and significance," said the Rev. Johann Roten, S.M., Marian Library director of research and special projects.

New this year, the model train travels through an 18-by-12 foot display. Ten stations depict the events surrounding Jesus' birth and childhood. Each features lights and music or a story. It begins with the Annunciation, where the angel Gabriel speaks to Mary, said volunteer Phil Powers, who designed the electrical functions of the exhibit along with students from the School of Engineering. The train will be housed on the seventh floor of the library.

Also on the seventh floor, "From Heaven to Earth and Back" includes figures portraying the 20 Mysteries of the Rosary, which are events in the life of Mary and Jesus. Additionally, *A Provençal Welcome* shows an extensive French Provençal village of 150 clay figures called santons.

"Between Rain and Corn" on the first floor of the library exhibits clay Nativities from New Mexico, which show how Native Americans incorporated Christianity into their cultures.

"From Hammock to Jar" on the second floor illustrates several cultures' interpretation of the Nativity, including those who represent it only in two-dimensional ways. Also featured are Nativities from Spain, Portugal and Italy, where the focus is not on the manger but on the three kings.

"The Marian Library has more than 3,000 Nativities in its collection. Every year, we draw from those to create a special theme and a unique experience," said Kathleen Webb, dean of University Libraries. "The exhibit has become a tradition with many families and it is our gift to the community."

A new book, *God Still Comes*, written by Roten offers extensive information on the Marian Library's collection of Nativities, also called crèches, along with more than 250 large, colorful photos.

World Nativity lesson plans prepared by education majors from the University's School of Education and Health Sciences are also available for download on the exhibit's website. The lessons are free and suitable for pre-K through 8th grades.

At the Manger will be open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday, and 1 to 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. It will be closed for holidays on Dec. 8, 24, 25 and 31; and Jan. 1 and 18.

For more information on exhibits, hours, directions and parking, visit <http://udayton.edu/libraries/manger> or call 937-229-4265. Guided group tours for six or more are available on request by calling 937-229-4214.

The University of Dayton's Marian Library/International Marian Research Institute (IMRI) is the world's largest repository of books, artwork and artifacts devoted to Mary, the mother of Christ, and a pontifical center of research and scholarship with a vast presence in cyberspace. Its redesigned All About Mary website, at [udayton.edu/imri/mary](http://udayton.edu/imri/mary), makes knowledge on Virgin Mary available worldwide.

For more information, contact Meagan Pant, assistant director of media relations, at 937-229-3256 or [mpant1@udayton.edu](mailto:mpant1@udayton.edu).